



DEPARTMENT OF STATE
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20520

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INC. 11/11/77 (28) 4/29/82
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September 30, 1977

Dear Mr. Commissioner:

Thank you for your letter of September 29, concerning my request that you exercise parole authority to admit into the United States four Haitian nationals who are now at the U.S. Naval Base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. I believe that you may have misunderstood the Department's intention in recommending this grant of parole. It was our recommendation that parole be granted strictly for the purpose of bringing these Haitians to the U.S. in order that their claims for asylum could be given the same sort of due process provided to other aliens arriving in this country. We see no reason why, after normal hearings, such aliens could not be returned to Haiti if their claims are refuted. Indeed, if an adequate case cannot be made for returning these aliens from the continental United States, then certainly the Department could not approve procedures for their forcible return from Guantanamo.

As noted in my letter of September 22, it is particularly important in light of the recent demarch by the representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) that not only the substance but the form of the treatment accorded these claimants be in accordance with internationally accepted practices. The Department approved the return of 97 out 101 Haitians who recently landed at Guantanamo because, after careful review, it was our judgment that, either no claims for asylum were made or the claims were vaguely put and without any foundation whatsoever.

Mr. Leonel J. Castillo,
Commissioner,
Immigration and Naturalization Service,
425 I Street, N. W.,
Washington, D. C. 20536.